

REMARKS

The final Office Action dated February 4, 2009, has been reviewed carefully. This Amendment which responds to the objections and rejections contained therein is being filed with a Request for Continued Examination. It is respectfully submitted that the present Amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

Claims 2, 4, 21-24 and 28-30 are pending in the application.

Claims 1, 5-19, 25-27 and 31-47 have been cancelled or withdrawn.

Statement of the Substance of the Interview

The Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner granting in the Interview Request. Pursuant to MPEP §713.04, Applicant submits the following Statement of the Substance of the Interview. A telephonic interview was held on April 6, 2009, between Examiner Jamisue A. Plucinski and the undersigned representative of the Applicant. The proposed amendment, which Applicant's representative submitted as distinguishing the present invention over the cited prior art was discussed. The Examiner and the Applicant's representative also discussed the support in the Specification for the amendments. Specifically, the term "digital shadow" is defined in the Specification at Page 11, lines 20-22 and the recital that the server "acquires...information" and presents such information for the user is supported in the Specification at Page 11, lines 28-30.

The Examiner indicated that Applicant's amendments overcome the cited references, but that a further search may be required. Thus, a Request for Continued Examination is being filed herewith.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 21-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. As suggested by the Examiner, the Applicant has amended claims 21, 22 and 23 to recite as the preamble, “Computer executable instructions embodied in a computer readable medium, the instructions causing the computer to perform the steps of,” followed by the individual steps. Having made this amendment, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 21-24 comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 2, 4, 21-24 and 28-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2005/0197892 to Bilibin et al., (“Bilibin”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,463,420 to Guidice et al. (“Guidice”).

Applicant’s invention as set forth in representative independent claim 2, as amended, comprises in part:

A mail piece tracking system including:

A. one or more servers that perform the operations of:

- i. *acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services and delivery companies and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing delivery status information and linking the mail piece delivery status information with respective user identifiers, thereby informing the user of an incoming package;*
- ii. receiving one or more messages from the senders of the respective mail pieces and linking to the delivery status information an attachment consisting of the one or more messages from the senders of the mail pieces;
- iii. producing on a user’s personal web page listings of the delivery status information for the mail pieces directed to respective users that are associated with the user identifiers;
- iv. including links to the respective messages in the listings of the delivery status information allowing the user to perform

- at least one of: sending or receiving a message, receiving or paying a bill, and verifying information based upon a digital signature; and
- B. one or more browsers or client executables through which the respective users associated with the user identifiers access the delivery status information and the links to the respective messages.

Bilibin, in contrast, describes an apparatus, system and method for zone level rating for each of multiple carriers. The Examiner points to Figs. 56 and 57 of Bilibin, which are screen displays for a computer which provide a shipping number and a shipping label, respectively, for a package to be shipped by the user of the service. As noted in Paragraph 0393 of Bilibin, Fig. 56 provides a Package Number Screen. Fig. 57 is described in Paragraph 0394 as a screen from which a label can be printed, and instructions for printing and use of the shipping label are provided for a user who is planning to ship the package.

In sharp contrast, Applicant's system and method is not merely providing a shipping number and a label for a package that is being sent out by the user, but instead provides a comprehensive system whereby, among other things, a user is made aware of packages that are being shipped to the user by various third parties using any one of a number of shipping services.

Bilibin is silent on this feature of Applicant's invention which is recited in amended claim 2, for example, as *acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services or delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing delivery status information and linking the mail piece delivery status information with respective user identifiers, thereby informing the user of an incoming mail piece.*

More specifically, Applicant's system not only provides delivery status information, but also searches for information from shippers and suppliers about any packages that have been or are being shipped to the user by one or more senders, even if the user is as yet unaware of the package having been sent.

In contrast, Bilibin requires that the user is aware of the existence of the package. As stated regarding in the description of Figs. 56 through 58: "Fig. 56 through 58 are graphic representations of exemplary online screens *with which a user controls the final shipping and label printing for a particular package* in an alternative exemplary embodiment in an Internet environment." (Emphasis added). Thus, the user is controlling the shipping of the particular package. In Applicant's system, the user is informed of the package being shipped to the user from a third party.

As stated in Applicant's Specification, at Page 7, lines 9-18: The table 28 includes a plurality of fields 34 that contain, for each entry, information relating to the corresponding mail piece. A status field 34 informs the user of the delivery status of the mail piece through the icons 35. If the mail piece has been delivered, the entry includes a checkmark 35a in the status field. For a mail piece that has not yet been delivered, the entry includes in the status field an icon that indicates how the mail piece has been shipped, i.e., by postal air service as indicated by a plane icon 35b, or by postal ground service as indicated by a truck icon 35c. Additional icons may be used to indicate other delivery services and/or companies, such as, FEDX, UPS and so forth, or the icon 35 may be linked to the associated delivery service and/or company information."

From this, it can be appreciated that Applicant's system is advantageous for an

individual user because it informs the user of the incoming package. It also provides delivery status information including the shipping method and the shipping company. The user may not have this information prior to Applicant's system informing the user of the package on the user's personal web page. In contrast, Bilibin allows a user who wants to ship a package to do research into the cost of shipping a package through various means and so forth. Bilibin is directed to users of the system who are shippers of parcels ("Shippers") and multiple carriers of parcels ("Carriers"). Bilibin is silent on information for a receiver of a parcel.

Accordingly, Bilibin alone does not render Applicant's invention obvious.

The Examiner has indicated that Guidice teaches a system identifying submitted orders by a user ID. Guidice states as an advantage: "By integrating carrier tracking information into the supplier's web site, the customer is not forced to navigate away from the supplier's site and navigate back to continue business with the supplier. In this manner, the supplier provides the most recent delivery status information to customers for all orders placed within a predetermined period of time (e.g., 30 days) from all authorized carriers having web tracking capabilities." (Col 6, lines 32-39) Thus, the Guidice system is a supplier's website which a user can use to "Track Orders" that the user (i.e., the customer) has placed with that supplier. *See: Fig. 4.* The supplier would be a vendor or manufacturer who sells particular wares and the user has placed an order with that supplier for such merchandise.

In contrast, Applicant's system is not associated with only one supplier of merchandise, but instead is a comprehensive system for the end user's benefit that obtains information about mail pieces and informs the user that such a mail piece is being

shipped to the user, and it also provides the information about the particular shipping method being used. Thus, it is not confined as is Guidice to a particular supplier, but instead Applicant's invention provides information to the user about packages being shipped to the user by any suppliers, using any carrier and/or shipping method. This information is provided on the user's personal web page.

Thus, Guidice alone does not render Applicant's claimed invention obvious.

Furthermore, the combination of Bilibin and Guidice does not render Applicant's invention obvious. Bilibin's teachings of a method for printing labels and other services for a shipper of a package, with Guidice's teaching of shipping information being provided on a supplier's website, still does not give rise to Applicant's claimed feature of For this information about a package being shipped to the user, the user need only check his/her own personal website, and does not need to check the supplier's or the shipper's websites, as in the cited references. Both references are silent on the feature of informing the user of a package on his/her personal website, and other features of *acquiring information from one or more mail piece sources, postal services or delivery companies, and creating a digital shadow for each mail piece containing delivery status information and linking the mail piece delivery status information with respective user identifiers, thereby informing the user of an incoming mail piece.*

Thus, the combination does not render Applicant's invention obvious.

Accordingly, based upon the Amendments and arguments presented herein, it is respectfully submitted that Applicant's invention is patentable over the cited references.

All of the independent claims have been amended herein and it is believed that such claims are in condition for allowance. All independent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. All dependent claims are dependent from independent claims which are believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, all dependent claims are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,

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